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Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre (A/61/166). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General who provided additional information and clarification.

2. The report of the Secretary-General was submitted pursuant to the request in resolution 59/276 of 23 December 2005, in which the General Assembly took note with appreciation of the proposal of the Government of Austria to construct a new conference facility within the boundaries of the Vienna International Centre. In the resolution the General Assembly also entrusted the Secretary-General to determine, in cooperation with the other three organizations located at the Vienna International Centre, the cost-sharing arrangements for potential future costs arising from the project within the amount indicated in his note, on the understanding that the related financial requirements will be dealt with in the context of the proposed programme budget for the respective bienniums; and to report thereon to the General Assembly for its review and decision. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report on the progress in the project implementation to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.

3. In paragraph 4 of his report, the Secretary-General presents a breakdown of the cost-sharing arrangement for the construction of additional conference facilities (see table below) and notes that the new conference facility will be available in 2008. Also, paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report indicates that from 2008 to 2010, the new facility would serve as a "swing space" while asbestos was being removed from the existing conference building. During that period, the organizations would incur no additional maintenance and operation costs relating to the new conference facility.

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Cost-sharing arrangement

Participating organization	*Share (percentage)*	*Contribution (euros)*
International Atomic Energy Agency	80.0	2 000 000
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	13.0	325 000
United Nations Office at Vienna	4.0	100 000
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	3.0	75 000
Total	**100.0**	**2 500 000**

4. The project would be carried out by the host country Government in its entirety. To that end, a memorandum of understanding with the host country Government was finalized on 18 October 2004, with a project cost ceiling of €52.5 million. Of that amount, €2.5 million would be contributed by the United Nations and three other Vienna-based organizations towards the purchase of furniture and equipment which the contributing entities would then own. The Committee was informed that the United Nations share (€100,000) would be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009.

5. The Advisory Committee has in the past expressed its concern about asbestos in United Nations buildings and its potentially damaging health effects. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed by the Secretariat that costs related to the removal of asbestos were not included as part of the total project cost of €52.5 million as the asbestos removal in the present Vienna conference centre is already being undertaken by the host Government (A/61/166, paras. 5-6). **The Advisory Committee would welcome updates on asbestos removal in future reports of the Secretary-General on the construction of additional conference facilities.**

6. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre (A/61/166).**